

Message Text

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R 192315Z FEB 74
FM SECSTATE WASHDC
TO AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

S E C R E T STATE 033205

EXDIS

FOLLOWING VIENTIANE 01119 ACTION SECSTATE FEB 12TH.

QUOTE

S E C R E T VIENTIANE 1119

EXDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: EAID, LA
SUBJECT: LAO RECONSTRUCTION AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

1. DISCUSSIONS WITHIN THE MISSION ON THE SUBJECT OF
FUTURE AID TO LAOS HAVE RESULTED IN OUR CONCLUDING THAT
LAO RECONSTRUCTION AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMS
MIGHT WELL BE DISASSOCIATED FROM THE REST OF INDOCHINA
GIVEN THE RAPIDITY WITH WHICH A REAL CEASEFIRE AND
POLITICAL ACCOMMODATION ARE BEING ACHIEVED.

2. AID DIRECTOR MANN HAS MADE THE FOLLOWING PORPOSAL
WHICH WE DISCUSSED WITH ASSISTANT SECRETARY INGERSOLL
AND WHICH WE ARE FORWARDING WITH HIS CONCURRENCE.

QUOTE THE SOVIET UNION HAS ALWAYS MAINTAINED THAT
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IT IS INTERESTED IN POST WAR RECONSTRUCTION AND ECONOMIC

DEVELOPMENT IN LAOS. IT MIGHT THEREFORE BE WORTH CONSIDERING WHETHER THE SOVIET UNION MIGHT BE BROUGHT INTO A PRODUCTIVE DONOR COUNTRY ARRANGEMENT HERE WITH US AND WITH OTHER DONOR COUNTRIES AND INTERNATIONAL FINANCIAL ORGANIZATIONS. INSTEAD OF WORKING EXCLUSIVELY THROUGH THE ESTABLISHED ORGANIZATIONS A LAO DONOR GROUP WITH THE SOVIET UNION AND OTHER COMMUNIST COUNTRIES MIGHT BE ESTABLISHED WHICH WOULD CONCERN ITSELF WITH THE LONG-RANGE ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL REQUIREMENTS OF LAOS ONCE THE COALITION GOVERNMENT HAS BEEN FORMED.

THERE ARE VARIOUS WAYS IN WHICH ONE COULD PROCEED WITH REGARD TO SOUNDING OUT THE RUSSIANS AND PRIME MINISTER SOUVANNA PHOUMA AND THESE COULD BE ELABORATED IF THE FOREGOING IDEA IS FOUND INTERESTING BY WASHINGTON. UNQUOTE

3. I FIND MANN'S IDEA INTRIGUING BUT THE CONSIDERATIONS WHICH WILL BEAR ON IT GO FAR BEYOND THE PROBLEMS OF POST-WAR LAOS. ON THE PLUS SIDE WE SEE BENEFITS IN COLLABORATION HERE AS PART OF AN OVERALL POSTURE OF DETENTE.

4. IF, AS SEEMS POSSIBLE, THE RUSSIANS ARE SINCERE IN SEEKING A TRULY NEUTRAL AND INDEPENDENT LAOS, CONSORTING WITH THEM AND OTHER COUNTRIES INCLUDING OTHER COMMUNIST COUNTRIES ON AID WOULD HELP KEEP LAOS DEFUSED AND WOULD DOUBTLESS CONTRIBUTE TO RECONCILIATION AND REUNIFICATION. THIS IDEA WOULD HAVE TO BE PURSUED IN SUCH A WAY NOT TO RAISE CHINESE SUSPICION THAT THE USG WAS RELINQUISHING OUR SUPPORT ROLE IN LAOS TO THE SOVIETS AT CHINESE DISADVANTAGE. THE CHINESE COULD, OF COURSE, ALSO BE ENCOURAGED TO PARTICIPATE. THE LIKELIHOOD OF NORTH VIETNAMESE PARTICIPATION WOULD SEEM TO BE REMOTE AND THE EFFECT OF THEIR PARTICIPATION OR LACK OF IT WOULD HAVE TO BE WEIGHED. I WOULD OF COURSE BE LEERY OF ANY ARRANGEMENT WHICH DILUTED THE POLITICAL IMPACT OF OUR ACTIVITIES BUT BELIEVE THIS IDEA MERITS VERY SERIOUS CONSIDERATION. WHITEHOUSE UNQUOTE KISSINGER

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NNN

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